UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/2028
22 November 1995

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council, welcoming Dayton breakthrough, decides to terminate arms embargo against former Yugoslavia in phases as soon as parties formally sign Peace Agreement.

* Security Council decides to suspend sanctions against Federal Republic of Yugoslavia indefinitely, provided it signs Dayton Peace Agreement; sanctions to remain in force against Bosnian Serbs until they withdraw behind zones of separation.

* Special Envoy Annan meets with representatives of UNPF, UNHCR and ICRC in Zagreb to discuss ongoing humanitarian efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

* Secretary-General arrives in Ottawa for two-day official visit to Canada; hails Canadian commitment to peace, development, justice and human rights.

* * *

The Security Council today welcomed the initialling of the Peace Agreement by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in Dayton, Ohio. The Council decided to terminate the arms embargo imposed by resolution 713 (1991) as soon as the Secretary-General reported that the parties had formally signed the Agreement. It took that action by adopting resolution 1021 (1995) by 14 votes in favour to none against, with the Russian Federation abstaining.

The Council decided that the provisions of the embargo should remain in place during the first 90 days following the submission of the Secretary-General's report. During the second 90 days, all provisions should be terminated, except that the delivery of heavy weapons and ammunition for them, mines, military aircraft and helicopters should continue to be prohibited until an arms control agreement took effect. After 180 days, and after a report from the Secretary-General on the implementation of Annex 1B of the

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Peace Agreement (Agreement on Regional Stabilization), all provisions would terminate unless the Council decided otherwise.

* * *

The Security Council also decided today to suspend its sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), with the proviso that they would be automatically reimposed if the Federal Republic did not sign the Peace Agreement reached yesterday in Dayton. The Council took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 1022 (1995), which welcomed the initialling of the Agreement.

The Security Council specified that the suspension of sanctions would not apply to the Bosnian Serb party until the day after all Bosnian Serb forces had withdrawn behind the zones of separation established in the Peace Agreement. The Council also stipulated that sanctions would be reimposed if the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) or the Bosnian Serbs failed significantly to meet their obligations under the Peace Agreement, unless the Council decided otherwise taking into consideration the nature of the non-compliance.

The Council decided that the sanctions would be terminated on the tenth day following the holding of free and fair elections provided for in the Peace Agreement, provided the Bosnian Serbs had withdrawn from and respected the zones of separation. It decided that all funds and assets frozen or impounded under the sanctions regime could be released in accordance with applicable law. It added that suspension or termination of obligations pursuant to today's action would be without prejudice to the claims of successor States to the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Council urged all parties concerned to assist in locating the two French pilots missing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to ensure their immediate and safe return.

* * *

Special Envoy Kofi Annan today convened a meeting in Zagreb of representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations Peace Forces (UNPF). They discussed the transition to the international force as it will effect ongoing humanitarian efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Annan and Thorvald Stoltenberg, Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, met yesterday with Serb leaders in Sector East to discuss follow-up to the Basic Agreement on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium. The Agreement was signed by the Croatian Government and the local Serbs on 12 November.

* * *

(more)

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali arrived in Ottawa last night at the start of a two-day official visit to Canada. He was received at the airport by Romeo LeBlanc, Governor-General of Canada, the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, Robert Fowler, and senior Government officials.

This morning, the Secretary-General laid a wreath at the Peace-keeping Monument in Ottawa, and met peace-keepers from the Canadian Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He was later awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by Carleton University.

In the afternoon, Mr. Boutros-Ghali attended the final meeting of the Canadian Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations. He later delivered a public lecture at the Ottawa Congress Centre, as part of the World Leaders Series hosted by the United Nations Association of Canada and the Canadian Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary.

During the day, the Secretary-General expressed gratitude for Canada's dedication to the United Nations, and for its involvement in international affairs. With its unwavering commitment to peace, development, justice and human rights, Canada could be crucial to the future of the world Organization, he said.

* *** *

UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York
Prepared by Central News

DH/2029
24 November 1995

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council expresses readiness to set up transitional authority, international force to aid implementation of basic agreement signed by Croatia and Serbs.

* Bosnian Government army soldiers are reported to have looted United Nations base in Bihac pocket in northwestern Bosnia.

* Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, in Canada, says member States have unique forum for dialogue in United Nations.

* Secretary-General calls on international community to demonstrate solidarity with people of Sierra Leone

* Representatives of 150 Governments to meet in Vienna next week to consider further reductions in ozone-depleting chemicals.

* Asia-Pacific governments and non-governmental organizations address threats to environment.

* United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development introduces new online information service.

* * *

The Security Council has welcomed the Basic Agreement on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium in Croatia, signed between the Government of Croatia and the local Croatian authorities.

Unanimously adopting resolution 1023 (1995), late Wednesday night, the Council stated its readiness to consider the request by the parties to the Agreement to establish a Transitional Administration and to authorize an appropriate international force to facilitate the implementation of the Agreement. The Council stressed the need for the Government of Croatia and the local Serb party to cooperate fully on the basis of the Agreement and refrain from any military activity or any measures that might hinder the implementation of the transitional arrangements. It reminded them of their obligation to cooperate fully with the United Nations Confidence Restoration

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) and to ensure its safety and freedom of movement.

* * *

Bosnian Government army soldiers were reported to have looted a United Nations base in the Bihac pocket in northwestern Bosnia. United Nations Radio in the former Yugoslavia reported that about 100 Bosnian Government soldiers shot at and looted the Bangladesh Battalion logistics base in Velika Kladusa. Reinforcements in Saxon armoured vehicles were dispatched from Bihac Command to assist the 80 unarmed Bangladeshi soldiers and United Nations Military Observers who were held by the Bosnian Government soldiers. The looting stopped when 35 government trucks departed with supplies and equipment. They also took 6 United Nations armoured personnel carriers. The report said this incident appeared to have been very well organized and connected to the blockade of the Bihac headquarters in Coralici earlier in the night. The United Nations continued to deplore such acts of violence and armed robbery against unarmed United Nations soldiers.

In another development, Croatian forces pulling out of areas in northwestern Bosnia due to revert to Serb control as a result of the Dayton Agreements, were reported to be looting and burning homes in their wake. A United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) spokesman said there were reports of houses being burned in Mrkonjic Grad and Sipovo.

Otherwise, the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina was generally quiet with some firing incidents and warring faction activity, the spokesman said. Restrictions of movement were still being experienced in some parts.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said that member States had a unique forum for dialogue in the United Nations. The Secretary-General's comments came in a lecture delivered in Ottawa, Canada as part of the World Leaders series, hosted by the United Nations Association of Canada and the Canadian Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali said many of the old assumptions had faded and as such new dimensions must be achieved. The global phenomenon of democratization must be addressed in all its dimensions, within and among States. In the United Nations, the Secretary-General said Member States had a means to deal with global problems, among them countering international crime, drugs and disease, finding the sustainable balance between the economy and the environment. Today, more than ever he said, the nations of the world confronted problems undeniably global in dimension. No single nation, acting alone, could achieve a lasting solution. The United Nations helped to define the common interest.

(more)

The Secretary-General leaves New York over the weekend on a trip to Africa which will take him to Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Benin and Cote d'Ivoire. A United Nations spokesman said the Secretary-General would hold talks with the leaders of those countries and also attend the Francophonie Summit in Cotonou, Benin next Friday.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has called on the international community to demonstrate its solidarity with the people of Sierra Leone. In a report on the situation in Sierra leone, the Secretary-General said that while the situation in Sierra Leone was generally characterised by conflict, human suffering and economic decline, there were some positive emerging trends, which, if assisted, would contribute to the re-establishment of peace and stability.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali said the ongoing process of democratization, particularly the elections set for next February, was a significant element in this development and worthy of the support of the international community. The Secretary-General said the internal conflict that had raged for the last four years had damaged or destroyed much of the vital physical and social infrastructure of the country. Some initial steps must be taken now to signal the international community's commitment to assist Sierra Leone's democratization process.

In this connection, the Secretary-General has instructed the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to field a team of experts to prepare, in collaboration with the Government, a coordinated and workable action plan for the demobilization and reintegration of combatants. He has also instructed the Electoral Assistance Division to work closely with other UN agencies to assist in coordinating international observers during the elections and in strengthening national observer groups.

* * *

Representatives of 150 governments will meet in Vienna to consider further reductions in methyl bromide and other ozone-depleting chemicals in accordance with the Vienna Convention signed ten years ago.

Under the Convention's Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, governments had agreed to phase out the major chemicals that destroyed the ozone in the stratosphere. These included chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), methyl chloroform and carbon.

Ratified by 150 countries, the Montreal Protocol contains separate phase-out schedules for developing countries, industrialized countries and countries with economies in transition. However, these time-tables were made flexible by the "essential use" exemptions, which allowed countries to apply

for an exemption to consume a limited quality of such chemicals. Several countries have applied for exemption.

A key proposal is an amendment to the Montreal Protocol to phase out methyl bromide, the most important ozone-depleting chemical whose phase-out has not yet been agreed upon. But because no alternatives for its uses are available at present, some countries have argued against its control.

Other concerns that will be addressed at the forthcoming meeting include accelerating the phase-out by both developing and industrialized countries of certain relevant chemicals, dumping, illegal traffic and uncontrolled production of those substances. There are also financial considerations on the agenda. Developing countries need financial assistance to enable them to switch to ozone-friendly chemicals.

"The risk we face is that our apparent success in tackling this issue over the last ten years is causing complacency," said Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNDP). She urged people to understand that the ozone problem was not yet solved and the ozone layer would not recover unless emissions were controlled and phased out.

About 500 participants are expected at the two-week session. Among them, there will be representatives from parties and observers from non-parties, industry, environmental non-governmental organizations and collaborating organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the World Bank, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

* * *

A prospective doubling of the population of the Asia-Pacific region by the year 2040 could bring about an ecological disaster. Policy-makers, non-governmental organizations, media representatives and business people from some 40 countries concerned at the outlook, met this week at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, to work out a plan of action to be adopted by their Environmental Ministers.

The Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Adrianus Mooy, said despite Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and numerous bilateral and multilateral treaties, the global environment, particularly that of Asia and the Pacific, continued to deteriorate. He blamed that predicament on continued poverty, unsustainable economic growth and a massive increase in population.

(more)

Non-governmental organizations would be working closely with the media for a consensus on sustainable development and discussing their respective roles in reversing current trends.

The Ministers will join their delegations on 27 November for a "regional earth summit" to adopt the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 1996-2000, designed to meet the challenge.

* * *

The United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD) has introduced a new online information service which builds on and integrates earlier DPCSD initiatives on the Internet World Wide Web.

The basic service, which includes reports of proceedings with hypertext links, parliamentary documentation, official statements, public information material, and customized links to other resources, will be continually expanded and updated to bring daily, unfiltered updates of relevant United Nations proceedings to the world.

The service is available at on the United Nations Home page on the World Wide Web (http://www.un.org).

* *** *

UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/2030

27 November 1995

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General arrives in Ghana on four-day official visit; meets with Presidential Adviser and senior Government officials.

* General Assembly calls on all States to promote objectives of Zone of Peace and Cooperation in South Atlantic.

* Secretary-General pays tribute to United Nations personnel for devoted efforts in service of peace in former Yugoslavia.

* Secretary-General proposes new approach to voter identification in Western Sahara; says process could be completed within four months.

* Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee hears statements on human rights situations in Iraq and Haiti.

* UNHCR expresses concern over increasing use of detention for asylum-seekers in Europe; urges States to respect principles of international protection.

* Legal Committee approves draft resolutions on relations with Host Country, international law assistance programme, and Decade of International Law.

* WFP sends emergency shipment of rice to Democratic People's Republic of Korea following recent floods.

* United States pledges $5 million to UNICEF on behalf of children of former Yugoslavia.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali arrived yesterday in Accra for a four-day official visit to Ghana. In a press conference at the airport, he stated that his visit was aimed at reinforcing relations between Ghana and the United Nations. He also wished to express his gratitude to President Jerry Rawlings for his important role in the Liberian peace process and to discuss how to maintain the momentum of the process so that peace, security and development prevailed not only in Liberia, but in the region.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Today, the Secretary-General visited the Kwame Nkrumah mausoleum, where he laid a wreath. He said his presence was an expression of respect for the memory of President Nkrumah, whom he had known personally. He added that it was only through African unity and solidarity that the problems of Africa could be overcome.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali later met with the Presidential Adviser on Governmental Affairs, Paul Victor Obeng, who led a delegation of senior Ghanaian officials. They discussed the situation in Liberia, including the role played by the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Observer Group (ECOMOG), and the situation in Sierra Leone. The Secretary-General expressed his gratitude for Ghana's support of the United Nations and in particular its role in peace-keeping.

* * *

The General Assembly today called on all States to cooperate in promoting the objectives of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation in the South Atlantic, and to refrain from actions which might create or aggravate tensions in the region. The Assembly requested the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to render all appropriate assistance which States of the zone might seek in their joint efforts to implement the Declaration of the Zone. It took that action by a resolution adopted by 124 votes in favour to none against, with the United States abstaining.

Also today, the Assembly took up the subject of the return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin. The representative of Iraq said the sanctions imposed against his country and foreign intervention in its affairs had led to large-scale expropriation of Iraqi artifacts. He called on the international community to stop such acts and to ensure the restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin.

Khmer art objects had been subjected to unprecedented pillaging and vandalism, and the danger to them was growing day by day, according to the representative of Cambodia. He called on the international community to declare illegal the importation, exportation or transfer of Khmer cultural goods; to stop national museums and related institutions from acquiring Cambodian antiquities; and to institute the necessary measures to help the Cambodian Government recover illegally exported objects from dealers.

* * *

The Secretary-General has said that he is not yet in a position to recommend definitive changes in the structure of the United Nations presence in the former Yugoslavia. In a report to the Security Council dated 23 November, he noted that important decisions had yet to be taken regarding the

implementation of the Peace Agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Basic Agreement on Eastern Slavonia. He added that he would revert to the Council as soon as the situation was sufficiently clear.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali paid tribute to former Special Representative Yasushi Akashi, Special Envoy Thorvald Stoltenberg, and Force Commander Bernard Janvier for their devoted efforts in the service of peace in the former Yugoslavia. He also commended the chiefs of mission, military commanders and personnel of the three United Nations missions in the region.

* * *

The identification of voters in Western Sahara has virtually come to a halt in the last few weeks and a new approach is needed to carry the process forward, according to the Secretary-General. In a report to the Security Council dated 24 November, he said the basic obstacle to progress related to certain tribal groups and to persons not resident in the Territory. The identification process involved the participation of a sheikh, or alternate, from the Moroccan Government and the Frente POLISARIO. However, the parties were either unable or unwilling to make sheikhs available at given times and places.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali proposed that when two sheikhs were present, one from each side, identification would take place as usual. When one party did not, for whatever reason, provide a sheikh, identification would take place on the basis of appropriate documentation, with the assistance of the one sheikh present. If neither party made a sheikh available, identification would be based on documentary evidence only. The Settlement Plan provided for the lodging of appeals against the inclusion or exclusion of any names on the list of eligible voters established by the Identification Commission.

If identification were allowed to proceed without interruption, 12 centres should be able to complete the process within four months, at a rate of 36,000 applicants per month, the Secretary-General said. "Should it fail to proceed with the necessary speed, it will be my intention, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1017 (1995), to present for the consideration of the Council alternative options, including the possibility of MINURSO's withdrawal."

* * *

The Government of Iraq alone is preventing the sale of billions of dollars of oil which could finance badly needed imports of food and medicines, according to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iraq, Max Van der Stoel. He told the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) on Friday that an oppressive atmosphere still prevailed in Iraq and that cruel and inhumane punishments were used.

The Independent Expert on Haiti, Adama Dieng, called for support for the reform of that country's judicial system, noting that recent violence had claimed at least seven lives. A lack of trust in the judicial system had caused people to take the law into their own hands. He said it was essential to implement the recommendations contained in his report in order to keep the situation from escalating.

The Secretary-General's Special Representative on internally displaced persons, Francis Deng, said that when a State could not ensure the protection and well-being of its people, the international community had the commensurate responsibility to hold it accountable and to obtain access to provide the needed protection and assistance. The international community should address the issues of causes, consequences and remedies, basing its response on prevention, protection and assistance.

* * *

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has expressed concern over the increasing use of detention for asylum-seekers in Europe. In a report on the issue, it said that asylum-seekers were being detained for weeks, months and even years while awaiting decisions on their claims or access to the asylum procedure. The report called on States to ensure that measures aimed at discouraging the abuse of asylum procedures should have no detrimental effect on the fundamental principles of international protection, including on the institution of asylum.

UNHCR's Director for Europe, John Horekens, acknowledged that many would-be migrants were abusing asylum channels to seek economic or other opportunities in Europe. However, he stressed that governments "must make the necessary distinction between the situation of refugees and asylum-seekers and that of other aliens. This distinction should be reflected in national aliens and asylum law."

* * *

The Sixth Committee (Legal) has approved a draft resolution that would have General Assembly urge the Host Country to consider lifting travel controls on certain diplomatic missions and Secretariat staff members of certain nationalities. The Assembly would express the hope that the host country would continue to take necessary measures to prevent interference with the functioning of diplomatic missions. It would also approve a series of recommendations of the Host Country Committee regarding the problem of diplomatic indebtedness.

The Sixth Committee also approved a draft on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law. That text would have the Assembly authorize the Secretary-

General to provide fellowships and scholarships in international law in 1996 and 1997, and to provide travel grants to participants from developing counties for regional courses.

By the terms of a draft resolution on the United Nations Decade of International Law, the General Assembly would express its appreciation for the work done on the Decade. It would also express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the successful organization of the United Nations Congress on Public International Law.

* * *

The World Food Programme (WFP) has sent an emergency shipment of rice to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for distribution to 500,000 people left destitute by recent floods. The initial shipment of 5,140 tons of rice represents the first United Nations food aid ever sent to the country. The WFP will provide a total of 20,250 tons of rice and 675 tons of vegetable oil, enough to feed half million Koreans for 90 days.

* * *

The United States has pledged $5 million to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on behalf of the children of the former Yugoslavia. The pledge was announced today by President Bill Clinton at a special ceremony at the White House. The money will go towards accelerating immunization and education programmes in the former Yugoslavia, as part of the rehabilitation process following the Dayton Peace Agreement.

* *** *

UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York
Prepared by Central News
DH/2031
28 November 1995

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council renews UNDOF mandate until 31 May 1996; calls on Israel and Syria to immediately implement resolution 338 (1973) with view to just and lasting peace in Middle East.

* Security Council welcomes reaffirmation by Angolan Government and UNITA of their commitment to peace process; stresses need for full implementation of Lusaka Protocol.

* Secretary-General discusses situations in Liberia and Sierra Leone with President of Ghana; expresses gratitude for Ghanaian support of United Nations.

* Security Council calls for immediate end to fighting in Sierra Leone; urges Revolutionary United Front to take advantage of Secretary-General's offer of good offices.

* Secretary-General expresses grave concern at recent fighting around Kabul; appeals to parties to exercise maximum restraint and to cooperate with United Nations Special Mission.

* Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs says Chernobyl aid projects must have adequate funding, citing long-term consequences of disaster.

* President of World Commission on Culture and Development introduces report entitled "Our Creative Diversity" at Headquarters.

* General Committee recommends General Assembly include item on World Tourism Organization pensions and sub-item on International Court of Justice vacancy in current agenda.

* States Parties to Law of Sea Convention discuss final draft protocol on privileges and immunities of International Tribunal.

* * *

The Security Council today renewed the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) for six months, until 31 May 1996. The Force was established in 1974 to supervise the cease-fire called for by the May

(more)

For information media—not an official record

1974 Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces.

By unanimously adopting resolution 1024 (1995), the Council called on the parties to implement immediately resolution 338 (1973). By that resolution, the Council called on the parties to apply the principles it had earlier defined for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, including withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in 1967, termination of all claims and states of belligerency, and acknowledgement of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of every State in the area.

The Council requested the Secretary-General to submit, by 31 May, a report on the development in the situation and the measures taken to implement resolution 338 (1973).

Following the adoption of today's resolution, President Salim bin Mohammed Al-Khussaiby (Oman) made the following complementary statement on behalf of the Council:

"As is known, the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (S/1995/952) states, in paragraph 14: 'Despite the present quiet in the Israel-Syria sector, the situation in the Middle East continues to be potentially dangerous and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached'. That statement of the Secretary-General reflects the view of the Security Council."

* * *

The Security Council today welcomed the joint communique issued by the Angolan Government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) on 13 November, in which they reaffirmed their commitment to the peace process. In a statement by its President, the Council noted that some of the steps necessary to implement the Lusaka Protocol had been taken recently, including the resumption of military talks in Luanda and the movement of the first UNITA combatants to quartering areas.

Despite those positive steps, the Council noted continued cease-fire violations, importation of weapons, restrictions on freedom of movement and the presence of mercenaries. It stressed that much remained to be done urgently to implement the Lusaka Protocol, including strict observance of the cease-fire, the continuation of the quartering process, the quartering of the Rapid Reaction Police, the return of the Angolan Armed Forces to defensive positions and the resolution of questions regarding the modalities of military integration.

The Council called on the Government of Angola and UNITA to continue to cooperate with the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) and to respect fully the status and security of international personnel.

(more)

* * *

On the third day of his official visit to Ghana, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met with President Jerry John Rawlings. He expressed his gratitude to the President for participating in the recent special commemorative session of the General Assembly and for the continuous support given by Ghana to the United Nations, including its peace-keeping operations.

The Secretary-General and the President discussed the situations in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Mr. Boutros-Ghali thanked Mr. Rawlings for having co-hosted the recent Pledging Conference on Liberia, which had secured commitments of $145 million. Regarding Sierra Leone, they expressed disappointment at the fact that the Revolutionary United Front leadership was not forthcoming in establishing a dialogue with the Government which would facilitate a political solution to the country's problems. They agreed that that attitude could be an obstacle to the ongoing process of democratization, and called on the RUF to initiate a process of negotiation.

* * *

The Security Council yesterday called for an immediate end to the fighting in Sierra Leone. In a statement by President Salim bin Mohammed Al-Khussaiby, it urged the Revolutionary United Front, whose attempt to overthrow the Government in 1991 began the conflict, to take advantage of the Secretary-General's offer of good offices to facilitate negotiations.

The Council expressed concern at the suffering resulting from the conflict, particularly that of the nearly 2 million internally displaced people -- nearly half the population of Sierra Leone. It underlined the need for generous humanitarian assistance and stressed the importance of a coordinated international humanitarian effort. It deplored attacks on humanitarian convoys and demanded that those responsible cease such actions immediately.

The Council welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative in preparing, in collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone, an action plan for the demobilization and reintegration of combatants. It also welcomed the programme of transition to democratic constitutional rule and supported the work of the Interim National Electoral Commission in preparing for the elections to be held next February. It called on Member States to provide the fullest possible material and financial support to the Commission.

* * *

The Secretary-General today expressed grave concern at the recent escalation of fighting around Kabul, in particular the bombing of the Afghan capital on 26 November, which resulted in many deaths and injuries among civilians. He appealed to all parties to exercise maximum restraint. He also called on them to cooperate with the United Nations Special Mission, headed by

Ambassador Mahmoud Mestiri, aimed at achieving an immediate cease-fire and promoting negotiations on a transitional mechanism for the transfer of power, to achieve a just and durable settlement acceptable to all Afghans.

* * *

Aid projects to deal with the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster are being terminated for want of funding, support and interest, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Peter Hansen, told correspondents at Headquarters today. He expressed the hope that tomorrow's Meeting of the Expanded Quadripartite Committee for Coordination on Chernobyl would reverse that trend.

Mr. Hansen pointed out that the Chernobyl accident was the world's worst environmental disaster. It had affected nine million people -- and displaced at least 375,000 of them -- in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. It had resulted in very high morbidity rates and a 285-fold increase in the incidence of thyroid cancer, particularly among children. Most disasters had a discernible beginning and end, he said, but the consequences of Chernobyl might not be apparent for 20 years.

* * *

The President of the World Commission on Culture and Development, Javier Perez de Cuellar, yesterday introduced the Commission's report, "Our Creative Diversity", at Headquarters. The former United Nations Secretary-General told correspondents that the international community had been frustrated at the failure of economic development to solve social problems. The economic approach was probably not the best way to solve development problems -- cultural issues had also to be addressed.

The Commission's report tried to put the human being at the centre of development, Mr. Perez de Cuellar said. Culture was not just music and art -- it also referred to human problems. The report dealt with developing and developed countries. Both the United States and Sierra Leone, for example, had social and economic problems that needed to be resolved. The international community had not paid enough attention to solving human problems.

The report focused on the cultural dimension of development, he continued. To gain a broader view of the issue, the Commission had held meetings with personalities and scholars in North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa. The main task now was follow-up to the report's recommendations. A proper follow-up mechanism was being discussed with the Director-General of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Secretary-General.

* * *

(more)

The General Committee today recommended that the General Assembly include in its current agenda an item on the admission of the World Tourism Organization to membership in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, and a sub-item on elections to fill a vacancy on the International Court of Justice.

The Committee further recommended that the item on the admission of the World Tourism Organization to the Pension Fund be allocated to the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary). The sub-item on the vacancy in the World Court would be taken up directly by the plenary under the item on elections to fill vacancies in principal organs. The Committee's recommendations will be considered by the Assembly on Friday.

* * *

The Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea began yesterday with a discussion on the final draft protocol on the privileges and immunities of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. The draft was developed in the Preparatory Commission for the International Seabed Authority and for the Tribunal.

The States Parties Meeting, which will end on 1 December, is concentrating on practical arrangements for the Tribunal. The Tribunal is the central mechanism of the compulsory dispute-settlement set up by the Convention, and will be based in Hamburg, Germany.

* *** *

UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York
Prepared by Central News

DH/2032
29 November 1995

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General reports numerous atrocities committed around Srebrenica, Zepa, Banja Luka and Sanski Most earlier in year; says international community must not allow such acts to go unpunished.

* Secretary-General concludes visit to Ghana; has meetings with President of Sierra Leone in Freetown and Liberian Council of State in Monrovia.

* General Assembly President, in address on Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People, says progress has been made in Middle East peace process despite delays and acts of violence.

* General Assembly discusses report of Security Council; speakers say informal mechanisms designed to enhance openness should be institutionalized.

* Administrative and Budgetary Committee considers reports of Joint Inspection Unit and administrative and budgetary aspects of peace-keeping financing.

* UNAIDS and DPI to co-sponsor panel discussion at Headquarters on Friday in observance of World AIDS Day.

* * *

There is undeniable evidence that summary executions, rape, mass expulsions and large-scale disappearances occurred around Srebrenica, Zepa, Banja Luka and Sanski Most earlier this year, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In a report issued today, he said international humanitarian law had been consistently violated after the enclaves of Srebrenica and Zepa fell to Bosnian Serb forces in July. Serb soldiers had executed an unknown number of Bosnian Muslim men, and General Ratko Mladic had reportedly been present at one site where killings had taken place.

The full horror of the atrocities had yet to be revealed, he continued. United Nations and other international organizations must have access to the areas in question. The international community should insist that the Bosnian Serb leadership cooperate fully with all relevant international mechanisms so

(more)

For information media—not an official record

that the events might be thoroughly investigated and the truth established. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia must have the ability to perform the task for which it had been created.

"The moral responsibility of the international community is heavy indeed," the Secretary-General concluded. "The world surely must not allow such acts to go unpunished, wherever and by whoever they are committed. If it does, these and similar crimes will happen again."

* * *

The Secretary-General this morning concluded his official visit to Ghana, and then paid an official visit to Sierra Leone. After arriving in Freetown, he had a meeting with President Valentine Strasser. President Strasser said that his Government had the support of the people for a democratic system and for the elections to be held next February. Mr. Boutros-Ghali said that his visit should be seen in the context of the renewed international interest in peace and democracy in Sierra Leone. He hoped that it would lead to increased international support for the process of democratization.

At noon, the Secretary-General left Sierra Leone for Liberia. He visited the headquarters of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) in Monrovia and addressed the staff, and later met with the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government. He was scheduled to leave for Cotonou, Benin, at the end of the day.

* * *

Progress has been made in the peace process on the question of Palestine despite delays and acts of violence, including the tragic assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, General Assembly President Diogo Freitas do Amaral (Portugal) said today. In a statement on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, he urged the parties -- Israel and the Palestinians -- to continue to display the necessary political will and good faith to bring the peace process to full fruition.

The Assembly President said it would be tragic if a resurgence of violence were to jeopardize the peace process. The United Nations should continue to play a role in mobilizing the needed assistance in order to establish solid foundations for peace. It should also promote the dialogue and confidence-building measures necessary to dissipate the hostility and mistrust which continued to alienate the peoples of the region. The Organization must continue to promote, in the interest of world peace and security, the peace process between all parties to the conflict, he stressed.

* * *

The Security Council's efforts to make its work more transparent were welcomed today during debate on the Council's report to the General Assembly. However, many speakers urged that informal mechanisms designed to enhance openness be institutionalized.

Speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the representative of Colombia welcomed the informal information meetings carried out by the Presidency on the current work of the Council. He expressed the hope that such meetings would be a regular feature, rather than left to the decision of the monthly President.

"The Security Council must not become a body whose decisions, which affect all of us, are adopted behind closed doors under almost clandestine conditions," said the representative of Mexico. He called for a formalization of the mechanism for consultations between the Council and troop-contributing States, emphasizing that those countries were placing their soldiers at risk and were very interested in decisions which could affect them.

The representative of Belgium joined in calling for greater consultation with troop-contributing countries. He stated that the experience of the contributors could help the Council to formulate mandates and adapt them to evolving situations.

* * *

The General Assembly should review the current formula for financing the support account of peace-keeping operations in order to provide enough resources for essential backstopping tasks in 1996, the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) was told yesterday. That suggestion was made by United Nations Controller Yukio Takasu, as the Committee began considering reports of Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and administrative and budgetary aspects of peace-keeping financing.

With changes expected in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), incomes for the support account in 1996 would be half the 1995 amounts, he said. Therefore, the number of staff funded from that account would be reduced drastically.

* * *

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Department of Public Information (DPI) will co-sponsor a panel discussion at Headquarters on 1 December in observance of World AIDS Day. The discussion will open with a statement by General Assembly President Diogo Freitas do Amaral, and a videotaped message from Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

The theme for this year's AIDS Day observance, "Shared rights, shared responsibilities", was chosen in recognition of 1995 as the International Year of Tolerance. The co-sponsors hope that this will highlight the need for all people -- whether infected with HIV or not -- to protect the rights of those infected and to accept responsibility for prevention and care if AIDS is to be confronted successfully.

* *** *

UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/2033
30 November 1995

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council extends mandates of United Nations peace-keeping missions in former Yugoslavia; UNPROFOR mandate to terminate on 31 January 1996.

* Secretary-General and President of Benin meet in Cotonou; discuss situations in Sierra Leone and Liberia and problems of West Africa.

* United Nations should play greater role in efforts to achieve just and lasting solution to question of Palestine, speakers tell General Assembly.

* General Committee recommends General Assembly include item on South Africa's unpaid United Nations assessments in current agenda.

* Legal Committee recommends General Assembly establish Preparatory Committee to draft convention creating international criminal court.

* * *

The Security Council today extended the mandates of the three peace-keeping missions in the former Yugoslavia: the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO); the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It did so by unanimously adopting three resolutions.

By resolution 1025 (1995), the Council again welcomed the Basic Agreement on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, signed by the Croatian Government and the local Serbs on 12 November. It requested the Secretary-General to report by 14 December on all aspects of the establishment of an operation consisting of a transitional administration and a transitional peace-keeping force to implement relevant provisions of the Basic Agreement. The Council decided that, in order to allow for the orderly establishment of that operation, UNCRO's mandate would terminate after an interim period ending on 15 January 1996 or when it had decided on the deployment of the transitional peace-keeping force, whichever was sooner.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Resolution 1026 (1995) extended UNPROFOR's mandate for a two-month period terminating on 31 January 1996, pending further action by the Council with regard to implementation of the Peace Agreement for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council invited the Secretary-General to keep it informed on developments in the peace process. It also invited him to report as soon as possible on aspects of the Peace Agreement as they affected the United Nations, in order to enable members to take a decision ensuring an orderly transfer of authority as envisaged in the Peace Agreement.

By adopting resolution 1027 (1995), the Council extended UNPREDEP's mandate for six months to 30 May 1995. It called on Member States to consider favourably the Secretary-General's requests for assistance to the Force in the performance of its mandate. While welcoming the positive role played by UNPREDEP and reaffirming its commitment to the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Council also recalled its concern about possible developments which might undermine confidence and stability in the country or threaten its territory. The Council requested the Secretary-General to keep it regularly informed of developments in the country and to report, if possible, by 31 January 1966 on all aspects of the mission.

* * *

On the first full day of his visit to Benin, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met with President Nicephore Soglo in Cotonou. They discussed the situations in Sierra Leone and Liberia and conducted an overview of the problems of West Africa.

The Secretary-General later told reporters that he looked forward to representing the United Nations at the Francophone Summit on Saturday. He attached great importance to the Francophonie as a cultural movement which contributed to the democratization of international relations.

In response to a question on Nigeria, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said he was following the situation very closely to avoid its aggravation. Regarding possible sanctions against the country, he said "this depends on draft resolutions which could be adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. At the moment there are drafts being discussed in New York."

In a related development, the following statement was issued by the Secretary-General's Spokesman at Headquarters today:

"It has been brought to our attention that the Nigerian Mission to the United Nations is distributing a letter which alleges that the Secretary-General has requested the sponsors of a draft resolution on Nigeria to postpone the tabling of the draft resolution in the Third Committee, until the outcome of his initiative on the matter. I would like to categorically state that the Secretary-General has not made, and is not planning to make, such a request."

(more)

* * *

The United Nations should play a greater role in efforts to achieve a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine, speakers told the General Assembly today. The representative of Egypt said that while the United Nations had been unable to achieve a just and lasting peace, it had contributed to a climate favouring the peace process. There was no doubt that the United Nations shouldered special responsibility regarding the question of Palestine, he added.

The representative of Tunisia said it was only natural for the United Nations to be following the negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis. He called on the Organization to continue its assistance to the Palestinians in the reconstruction phase and asked donors to fulfil their promises to the Palestinian people. The representative of Yemen called for the United Nations to continue to provide generous aid to the Palestinian Authority so that social and economic development might take place.

* * *

The General Committee today recommended that, because of the political importance of the issue, the General Assembly include in its current agenda an item on the normalization of the situation concerning South Africa's unpaid assessments for United Nations regular and peace-keeping budgets. The Committee also recommended that, due to the financial complexity of the matter, the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) be invited to provide technical observations on a proposed draft resolution by 12 December.

Inclusion of the item was first requested in a letter from South Africa dated 15 September. A memorandum annexed to the letter noted that the country had paid $11 million to the Secretariat on 3 October 1994. That sum represented South Africa's entire assessed contribution to both the regular and peace-keeping budgets from 23 June 1994, the date on which it resumed its seat in the General Assembly. However, a substantial sum remained attributed to South Africa as so-called arrears that were accumulated during the apartheid era, when representatives of the apartheid regime were excluded from participation in the General.

* * *

The General Assembly would establish a preparatory committee to draft a widely acceptable convention creating an international criminal court, by the terms of a draft resolution approved yesterday by the Sixth Committee (Legal). By that draft -- one of six approved as the Committee completed its work for the year -- the preparatory committee would meet from 25 March to 12 April and from 12 to 30 August in 1996 to consider major issues arising out of the draft statute of the court, which was prepared by the International Law Commission.

(more)

The Committee approved a draft resolution on the implementation of Charter provisions relating to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions. By that text, the Secretary-General, at the request of the Security Council, would analyse the effects of sanctions on third States and advise the Council on adjustments that might be made to mitigate their adverse effects.

The General Assembly would express its intention to initiate procedures deleting the "enemy States" clauses from the Charter, by the terms of another draft resolution approved yesterday. The Assembly would also decide that membership in the Special Committee on the Charter should be open to all Member States and that it should continue to operate on the basis of consensus. The draft was approved by 122 votes in favour to none against, with 6 abstentions (Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lebanon, Libya, Sri Lanka and Sudan).

* *** *